American Latino Museum Internship and Fellowship Initiative Kickoff Webinar (Live)

0:24
Hi, good evening, everybody.

0:26
My name is Jibran Villalobos and I'm here with the Institute of Museum and Library Services Kickoff webinar for the American Latino Museum Internship and Fellowship Initiative, also known as ALMIFI.

0:39
During this webinar, we'll discuss the basic information that all applicants should know and review a sample application.

0:46
If you have a question during the webinar, please submit it using the Q&A function and we'll answer questions at the end of the session.

0:55
So let's go ahead and get started.

0:58
Let's start by discussing 'What is IMLS'. IMLS is an independent federal grant making agency and the primary source of federal support for the nation's museums, libraries and libraries.

1:14
The IMLS vision and mission statements were adopted as part of the agency's current strategic plan.

1:21
Both emphasize that IMLS is here to support museums and libraries in their work of serving their communities.

1:29
IMLS's Vision is a nation where museums and libraries work together to transform the lives of individuals and communities, and our mission is to advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grant making, research, and policy development.

1:50
In our last annual grant cycle, we awarded approximately $40 million in funding to a diverse group of institutions including art, history, and science museums, zoos, aquaria, professional associations, universities, and Native American tribes.

2:09
One of our funding opportunities is ALMIFI, which is what we will be discussing today.

2:16
So, what is ALMIFI? That's what we're going to answer in the next few slides and we will be providing information on the purpose and intent of this grant program and for whom it is designed for.

2:29
The American Latino History and Culture Program was created by an Act of Congress in 2020, which authorized the Smithsonian to create the National Museum of the American Latino and instructed IMLS to create a grant program to improve operations, care of collections, and development of professional management at American Latino museums.

2:52
This is referred to as the American Latino Internship and Fellowship Initiative, ALMIFI.

3:00
You can be one of the following types of organizations to be eligible to apply to ALMIFI.

3:06
If you're applying as a museum, you will need to certify that you use a professional staff are organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes.

3:18
Own or use tangible objects, either animate or inanimate, care for these objects.

3:24
Exhibit these objects to the general public on a regular basis; at least 120 days a year, and conduct these activities in facilities that you own or operate.

3:36
As a museum, you should keep in mind that all applicants must meet certain requirements to be eligible for federal funding.

3:42
Your organization must be located in one of the United States' 50 states, its territories, or the District of Columbia, and your organization must be a unit of state, local or tribal government or a private nonprofit organization with tax exempt status.

4:00
Institutions of higher education are also eligible to apply.

4:05
What is important here is that you must also be in partnership with an institution of higher education, including Hispanic Serving Institutions.

4:14
The lead applicant can be the university or College in partnership with a museum or vice versa.

4:21
Either is correct, as long as there's a primary partnership in place between an institution of higher education and a museum.

4:32
Your museum may be a stand alone organization or they may be part of a larger institution such as a college or university, tribe, or a state or local government.

4:42
You could also qualify as a not-for-profit museum service organization or association whose primary purpose, as reflected in its mission, is to support museums identified above.

4:57
So now let's talk about 'What Can ALMIFI Fund.'

5:01
We will answer the question providing details on the types of projects and associated goals within the ALMIFI grant program, as well as offer a summary, some summary data on the number of ALMIFI projects that were funded last year.

5:16
ALMIFI grants are designed to support project based activities.

5:20
So let's take time to consider just exactly what that means.

5:24
The Project Management Institute defines a project as a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service or result.

5:33
They go on further to explain that a project iis temporary because it has to define beginning and end in time, and therefore this defines scope and resources.

5:45
And a project is unique in that it is not a routine operation, but rather a specific set of operations designed to accomplish a singular goal.

5:55
We recommend that you keep the definition in mind as you conceptualize your IMLS project.

6:01
Think of it as a temporary, non routine set of activities which collectively have a beginning and an end in time, a defined scope requiring specific resources, and which are designed to accomplish a specific, singular goal.

6:19
Now I want to talk about two program goals for ALMIFI.

6:23
Your project must align with one of the two program goals and a set of corresponding objectives.

6:29
Goal and objective choices should be identified clearly in the narrative.

6:33
For this, you'll want to see section D2C.

6:38
Goal one is the support of museum based undergraduate internships.

6:43
Its objectives correspond to the types of project AMIFI supports.

6:47
An example of this would be developing a new curriculum for museum studies programs with a lens on American Latino life for use by museums across the country.

6:58
This would correspond to Objective 1.1.

7:01
If there is already an existing internship program that is being expanded in relation to American Latino culture, this could correspond to Objective 1.2

7:14
Goal 2 is about Museums based fellowships to increase museum career opportunities for individuals focused on American Latino culture.

7:25
The two objectives are parallel to those that we saw in Goal 1.

7:29
They support the development or scaling up fellowship models for museum professionals on topics that increase their ability to work with museums centering American Latino culture.

7:42
Projects in Goal Two would establish or expand advanced professional studies, mentorship, and practical research.

7:52
All requests must be made between 100,000 and $750,000, including both direct and indirect costs.

8:02
If you ask for less than $100,000 or more than $750,000, your application will be rejected and not reviewed.

8:12
There is no cost share requirement for Almifi, though you may include one if your organization will contribute funds toward this particular project.

8:21
It's important to note that if you decide to include cost share in your application, it must be met by the end of the award.

8:28
We will hold you to that figure, so keep that in mind when applying.

8:32
Cost share may be in the form of cash, staff, or volunteer time or third party contributions.

8:39
It may not be funds from another federal resource.

8:44
Let me repeat that.

8:45
It may not be funds from another federal source. In terms of how many applications you may submit, there is no limit to the number of applications you can file in response to the FY24 funding announcement for ALMIFI.

9:01
As you consider the option to submit more than one application, we urge you to think about the capacity of your organization to manage multiple federal awards at once.

9:13
The amount of applications received and the amount of awards made can vary from year to year.

9:20
Here's a snapshot of our most recent application and award cycle.

9:24
In FY23, IMLS made eight ALMIFI awards with a total of $4.1 million in federal funds.

9:32
We received 22 Almifi applications, resulting in 36% of those applications being funded.

9:40
The average amount of federal funds for each project was $521,765.

9:51
Application Components.

9:53
In this section we will introduce the components of an ALMIFI grant application and provide an overview about the required, conditionally required, and supporting documents.

10:06
This is a list of the required documents.

10:08
All applications must include the documents listed here.

10:12
Omission of even just one might result in your application's rejection.

10:17
It is also important to note that there is a 10 page limit for the narrative.

10:21
If you exceed the page limits specified in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, we must remove the extra pages before your application goes out for review.

10:30
That means your reviewer may see a paragraph or sentence end in midair and will wonder about your organizational skills and your attentiveness to detail.

10:39
So make sure your content your content, fits right in the page limits specified, and make sure the number of pages holds when you convert your document into a PDF.

10:53
The second category of application components is that of conditionally required documents.

11:00
Some applications must include one, two, or even all three of these, and it's your job to figure out which are required for yours.

11:08
If you're applying as a nonprofit, then you must include your proof of nonprofit status issued by the Internal Revenue Service.

11:16
We will not accept a letter of sales tax exemption as proof of nonprofit status.

11:23
If you're using a federally negotiated indirect cost rate in your budget, then you must include a copy of your final rate agreement.

11:32
If you will create digital products during the council of your project, then you must complete and submit a Digital Products Plan.

11:41
Just like the required documents, omission of even one might result in your application's rejection.

11:46
Please note that the term digital product includes 1 Digitized and born digital Content, Resources or Assets and 2 software.

11:57
If you are creating any of these types of materials, you must include the form with your application.

12:05
The third group of application components is Supporting documents, and here is a partial list of examples.

12:12
Supporting documents are optional.

12:14
You may submit some or none.

12:16
Include only those items that will be supplement that will supplement your proposal.

12:21
This is not the place to introduce brand new information.

12:25
Rather, as the name suggests, they should lend you support to your project justification, work plan, and intended results that you've already spelled out in your application narrative.

12:35
For example, have you identified a partner whose involvement is key to the project's success?

12:41

If so, a letter of support or commitment would go a long way to reassuring reviewers that they are on board and the project will succeed.

12:50
Pictures can help give reviewers, who may not be familiar with your institution, programs, collections, or community a better idea of what you're describing within your narrative.

13:01
Vendor quotes or equipment specifications show that you've done some legwork in getting appropriate estimates for project costs.

13:08
We recommend that you be respectful of your reviewers time and avoid any temptation to include hundreds of pages of extraneous material.

13:17
Being judicious really does work to your benefit, as support documents can make or break an application.

13:23
Include what is important, helpful, and directly relevant to your project and stop there.

13:31
In the following sections of this presentation, we will focus on these application components, Narrative and Budget.

13:38
Go to the Notice of Funding Opportunity for complete instructions on how to prepare and complete all of the application components.

13:48
So let's talk about the narrative of your proposal.

13:51
You have 10 pages to address three very important sections: Project Justification, Project Work Plan, and Project Results.

14:00
The Notice of Funding Opportunity provides lengthy guidance on what the narratives should cover.

14:08
1st is the project justification.

14:11
What need, problem or challenge will your project address and how is that identified?

14:17

Describe how you have used your demographic information, economic circumstances, condition assessments, and other relevant data from reliable sources to define the need, problem, or challenge, and develop the scope for the project.

14:34
Who is the target group for your project and how have they been involved in the planning?

14:38
Target group refers to those who will be most immediately and positively affected by your project.

14:45
Identify the number of individuals in the target group, or in each target group if you identify more than one, who are the ultimate beneficiaries for this project.

14:55
Beneficiaries can refer to those who are likely to be added in the long term by your project.

15:01
They may or may not be the same as your target group.

15:05
Identify the number of individuals who will benefit from your project in the long term if reliable and defensible counts are possible.

15:14
Otherwise, describe the characteristics of the beneficiaries you expect to be served eventually by your project.

15:23
So now let's see how an actual ALMIFI applicant addressed this section.

15:28
The University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley applied for and received AMIFI funding last year.

15:35
We'll use their application to discuss how an applicant may respond to each section.

15:41
So here's an example.

15:43
When explaining their program goal, UTRGV cited specific objectives from the NOFO.

15:51
They plan to address objectives 1.2 and 2.1 through the creation of paid internships and fellowships.

16:03
To justify the need for this program, UTRGV provides data on the number of students receiving Pell Grants.

16:11
They then connect the dots by explaining that Pell Grant recipients have a high financial need and detailing some of the costs required to participate in an internship and fellowship.

16:26
They tie this all together with the explanation that most of their students cannot participate in unpaid internships.

16:37
Here are some additional points to keep in mind when defining your problem.

16:42
The federal government wants to invest wants its investments to result in something getting better.

16:49
As you define your need, problem, or challenge, articulate what will get better as a result of your project as precisely as possible.

16:58
Will your museum be able to expand their services as a result of additional staff?

17:03
Will new graduates be better prepared for the museum field with the requisite experience?

17:09
Will collections be better cared for?

17:11
Will their lifespan be extended?

17:14
Will access to your collections and the information surrounding them be expanded?

17:19
Identify why it's important that this particular change happens.

17:23
Hone your problem definition carefully in clear, succinct terms.

17:28
And lastly, gather and present data that support your problem definition.

17:35
So while UTRGV lists specific areas of study that are likely to be interested in their internship and fellowship program, they're also open to students from any discipline.

17:46
AMIFI does not set parameters for your target group, but we need to see that you have defined your audience.

17:53
Also, at the bottom of the section, you can see that they also held a focus group of students from their target audience to better understand their needs and interests.

18:08
Of course, participating students and museums will benefit from your internship programs, But when answering the question, you also want to consider the ripple effect that your program will have throughout the museum field, on a campus, or even within your community.

18:27
In Section E of the Notice of Funding Opportunity, under Review Criteria, you will find a list of questions that reviewers are asked to consider when they review your proposal.

18:38
It is a good idea to refer to these as you craft your narrative to be certain you are providing reviewers clear, solid information.

18:46
You will see that they correspond fairly directly with the prompts you were given to write your narrative.

18:55
So now let's talk about your Project work plan.

18:58
If the Project Justification section was the Why the Project Work Plan section is where you identify The who, what, when and how. Who will do what activities, when, and using what resources? You should explain how you will track your progress toward achieving your intended results and what you'll do if you need to correct course.

19:21
We also ask that you think about risks that are inherent in your particular project, and to tell us how you've taken that into account in your planning.

19:30
I'll say more about that in just a few minutes.

19:34

In addition to narrative texts, IMLS applicants are encouraged to use timelines and other visualization tools to communicate their work plans.

19:47
Your work plan will be built on activities, so it's important to be clear about just what an activity is.

19:54
An activity is something that someone does.

19:56
It has a beginning and an end, just like projects, and you know when you finished it because it doesn't need to be done anymore.

20:04
An activity is not a goal, a result or an outcome.

20:09
Rather, it is something that you do as part of striving to achieve this.

20:14
Aim for a reasonable level of detail in identifying your activities.

20:23
So the primary risk in UTRGV's proposal is that the students may not provide a high enough quality of service.

20:31
To mitigate that risk, the program will require participants to enroll in a museum studies course.

20:38
The program leads will also work closely with partner museums to ensure their satisfaction.

20:48
There is no checklist of risks, but every project has them.

20:52
The best proposals will show that you are aware of them and have thought through a plan for detailing with them.

20:57
Look at your activities and think about what could go wrong.

21:01
Focus on the ones where you experience your own or that of your group and yes, that could happen, and identify steps you would take in response to them.

21:12
IMLS knows that things go differently than expected.

21:15
We just want you to prepare by identifying implementable options.

21:20
Here are some examples of risk that might be part of your project for which you might seek ALMIFI funding.

21:26
A project may be dependent upon fundraising to generate the cost share, but it is not complete by the time that the application is submitted.

21:33
What will the institution do if that money is not available by the time that the project gets underway?

21:40
A project may be structured around university interns who will be selecting and trained according to well thought out processes.

21:49
What will happen if one or more interns drops out?

21:52
What's the plan for replacing them mid project?

21:56
A project depends on your community partners to achieve success but one but one partner drops out mid project.

22:03
What do you do then?

22:08
Almost all projects will include a project director and program coordinator, but we encourage you to get creative with the rest of your team, like UTRGV did with their student, family and faculty advisory boards.

22:23
When listing the required resources, it's important to consider the additional effort needed by staff as well as the funding required.

22:31
You should also be aware that these needs will likely change throughout the life cycle of your project.

22:38
Again, charts and graphs can be a great way to explain complex ideas in your proposals.

22:46
Figure out how to clearly communicate this information using available resources.

22:53
And once again, this is the list of questions in Section E of the Notice of Funding Opportunity that reviewers are asked to consider when they review your proposal.

23:03
So make sure that your narrative is answering these effectively.

23:07
The list ranges from proposed activities, key identified staff, and measurable information.

23:16
So now let's talk about project results.

23:18
The third section of your narrative should be devoted to articulating your project's intended results.

23:24
This section is your chance to convince the reviewers that your project will result in something getting better.

23:30
The need or problem you identified in your project justification will be addressed directly and it will be diminished or eliminated altogether.

23:40
We ask that you tell us what data you will collect and report in order to measure your project success.

23:46
If your project will generate tangible products, and most do, here's the opportunity to describe them and make the case that they will be useful.

23:55
And last but not least, we ask that you tell us how you will sustain the benefit of the project.

24:01
How will this improvement that you propose to make continue once your grant is over?

24:10
Generally, the benefits of an internship or fellowship program for students will be the development of museum skills, as we see in this application.

24:19
Those skills will then transfer to the professional world.

24:25
But as we mentioned in the beneficiaries example, your internship and fellowship program will affect more than just the target group.

24:33
As UTRGV writes, interns and fellows will also share what they learn with their families and their communities as a whole.

24:40

24:45
The product section is an opportunity to show the new resources that will be developed as part of your project.

24:54
IMLS always encourages awardees to continue their success beyond the funding.

25:00
When thinking about the sustainability of your project, consider how funding needs may change to reduce financial barriers and additional sources of funding that may become available in the future.

25:13
Including supporting documents in the section can help prove long-term feasibility.

25:22
Again, here's the list of review questions that reviewers are asked to consider when they read and score the Project Results section of your narrative.

25:30
These are found in Section E of the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

25:34
All of your results should be should tie back to your need, problem or challenge.

25:40
You may well experience tangential benefits and/or positive outcomes that make sure that you identify them as 'in addition to' and not 'instead of' your digital your original intended results.

25:54
Reviewers are likely to see that as a disconnect.

26:00

We often hear that defining intended results and success measures is challenging for applicants, so it's worth spending a bit of time on this.

26:09

26:11
Let's think back to the questions we referenced a couple of slides ago when we talked about defining the need, problem or challenge that your project is addressing.

26:18
If you said someone will learn something, how will you know?

26:22
If your problem related to segments of your community being better able to work together, how will you know when that has been achieved?

26:31
If you're digitizing to expand accessibility, how will you know when you've done it?

26:36
This focus on results and measuring success in meaningful ways is not new.

26:41
There has been a tremendous amount of work done on ways to measure success. For you as an applicant though, we encourage you to consider using a logic model or an outcomes-based Evaluation tool to explain your intended results and your plan for achieving them.

26:59
So to recap, your narrative has three sections, Project Justification, Project Work Plan, and Project Results, and you have 10 pages for it.

27:09
The sections are all equally important, right?

27:12
Clearly address what we ask you to address and keep an eye on those review criteria.

27:18
We're telling you here exactly what the reviewers will look for, so make it easy for them to find it and understand it.

27:27
Application Components In this section we will provide information on what to include in your project budget and budget justification, and provide some examples of allowable and unallowable costs.

27:41
An important component of your application is the budget.

27:44
This is the part of the application where you specify all the costs associated with your proposed budget.

27:50
The budget consists of two required components, the IMLS budget form and the budget justification.

27:57
The IMLS budget form is a fillable PDF that accommodates up to three years of project activities and expenses.

28:05
The budget should include the project cost that will be charged grant funds as those that will be supported by cost share.

28:12
In-kind contributions to cost share may include the value of services, for example, donated volunteer or consultant time, or equipment donated to the project between the authorized start and end dates of your project.

28:26
All of the items listed, whether supported by grant funds or cost share, must be necessary to accomplish project objectives ,allowable according to the applicable federal cost principles, auditable and incurred during the award period of performance.

28:42
The IMLS budget form can be downloaded directly from the IMLS website.

28:49
As you develop your budget, keep in mind that there are certain costs that are either allowable or unallowable according to federal regulations.

28:57
The allowability of a cost item for all federal grants are specified in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR),

29:03
sometimes referred to as two CFR 200, but the full title is Title 2, Subtitle A Chapter two-part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

29:20
Using the two CFR 200 as a basis, we've developed a short list of allowable costs that are most

common to Projects. See section D6 of the ALMIFI Notice of Funding Opportunity, which includes a partial list of the most common examples of allowable costs.

29:38
This short list of allowable costs is also shown on this slide.

29:44
These costs may be part of what you ask IMLS to pay for with federal funds, or what you will pay for as part of your cost share.

29:52
The rules about allowability apply equally to grant funds as well as cost share.

29:58
When completing your project budget, be sure to check that all the costs you include, whether grant funds or cost share, are allowable.

30:08
There are also some costs that are unallowable according to the federal regulations in two CFR 200

30:12
In section D6 of the ALMIFI Notice of Funding Opportunity, we also provide an abbreviated list of unallowable costs.

30:22
These are also listed on the slide.

30:24
Unallowable costs may not be part of what you ask IMLS to pay for.

30:27
Nor can they be part of what you will pay for as part of your cost share.

30:33
In fact, unallowable expenses cannot show up anywhere in your proposal.

30:38
As you prepare your application.

30:40
It's a good idea to compare your list of proposed expenses against these lists of allowable and unallowable costs and against the appropriate set of cost principles.

30:51
If, after that, you have specific questions, please contact us and we'll be happy to help.

30:59
In addition to the IMLS budget form, you will also prepare a budget justification.

31:04
This is an opportunity to provide, in a more detailed narrative format, an explanation or justification for the project costs.

31:12
The budget justification should be written to follow the cost categories in the IMLS form; the budget form.

31:19
In the justification, you will identify each expense and show the method of cost computation used to determine each dollar amount, including any that you may have consolidated and summarized on the IMLS budget form.

31:34
In other words, please show your math.

31:37
For example, in the section Salaries and Wages, you should identify each person whose salary or wages will be paid by IMLS funds or by cost share, provide their names and describe the role in the project.

31:50
Document the method of cost computation by including the base salary or wages for each person and the percentage of time each person is allocated to the project activities, which may be shown as a percentage of time, number of days, or number of hours.

32:06
If cost share is being provided by unpaid volunteers, explain how you arrived at the dollar amount used to represent the value of their services.

32:16
In the section of supplies, materials, and equipment, you should list each type of supply, material, and equipment that you propose to purchase or provide as cost share for the project.

32:27
Detail the number and unit cost for each item and explain how you arrived at the dollar amounts.

32:33
You may also provide vendor quotes or price list as supporting documents with your application.

32:42
In summary, considering all the components of your application, there are four general characteristics of successful AMIFI applications that reviewers will look for.

32:54
As you prepare your application, keep these characteristics in mind.

32:56
First, Institutional impact.

32:58
Your project should provide opportunities for internships and fellowships at American Latino museums for students enrolled in institutions of higher education, including Hispanic Serving Institutions.

33:12
Second, in depth knowledge.

33:14
Your proposal should reflect a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the subject matter.

33:21
Third, project-based design.

33:24
Your work plan should consist of a set of logical, interrelated activities tied directly to addressing the key need of your challenge. And 4th, demonstrable results.

33:37
Your project should generate measurable results that tie directly to the need or challenge that it was designed to address.

33:44
Overall, an application that has all of these four characteristics will stand out in the review process and will have the best chance of success for funding.

33:56
In this final section of our presentation, we offer some application tips and next steps.

34:03
We want to share with you the places to look For more information, such as the IMLS website where you can find the awarded grant search to learn more about the projects we have funded in the past.

34:16
The Awarded Grants section gives you an opportunity to explore our archive of grants that we have awarded in past years using a variety of criteria such as institution name, location, and keyword.

34:30

34:33
Your search will present basic information about the award and a brief description of the project.

34:39
This can be extremely helpful as you put your ideas together for your own project.

34:46
We have also posted the narrative and schedule of completion for a cross section of successful applications from 2023.

34:55
To find these examples, go to the Sample Application section on the IMLS website.

35:01
We can only make grants to eligible applicants that submit complete applications, including the attachments, on or before the deadline.

35:09
So here are some tips to help you do just that.

35:12
First, start early.

35:14
You've already done that by participating in this webinar.

35:17
Become familiar with grants.gov's Workspace.

35:20
It has many good features including upfront validation which allows you to correct errors prior to submission, and the opportunity to collaborate with others in creating your application.

35:31
Consider starting with the workspace overview and check out the tutorials.

35:36
Do your background research.

35:38
Make it easy for the reviewers to see that you are up to date and know what you're talking about.

35:44
Be sure that your application is complete.

35:46
Check it against the table of application components in the NOFO.

35:50
Make sure all application components are in the proper format and follow the correct naming conventions.

35:56
And lastly, submit to grants.gov early so you can correct any errors and avoid any drama created by technology challenges.

36:08
It's important to get your application submitted online through grants.gov before the deadline.

36:13
IMLS does not accept applications by mail or e-mail.

36:18
In order to register with grants.gov, you must have an active sam.gov registration and a unique entity identifier number.

36:26
So make sure your registrations for both of these sites are complete, your accounts are active, and that and that any necessary passwords are current.

36:36
These registrations expire periodically, so do not wait until it's time to hit the submit button to check on them.

36:43
Did you coordinate with any other staff members, such as your authorized organization representative, who may hold the accounts or passwords that you'll need to submit?

36:53
Both the sam.gov and grants.gov websites have robust help features and FAQs.

36:59
If you run into technical issues with either of these sites, you should reach out to their help desk and request a tracking case or ticket number in order to document your issue and attempts at resolving it.

37:11
Failure to have sam.gov or grants.gov registrations by the application deadline is not an excuse for submitting a late application.

37:17
So again, start early.

37:24
There are many components to the application and the narrative, and it is an essential and critical part of the package.

37:31
Peer reviewers, museum professionals from all types of museums, will be selected by IMLS to read each application and provide constructive and critical comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed projects.

37:45
They also base the reviews only on the information contained in the application.

37:50

37:53
Don't assume that a reviewer of IMLS will know something about your museum or your proposed project.

37:59
To help make sure your narrative is as clear and complete as possible, try this.

38:04
Revisit the ALMIFI Notice of Funding Opportunity and follow the narrative outline it provides.

38:10
Be sure to consider the review criteria associated with each section of the narrative.

38:15
Use headings, subheadings, or numbered sections in your narrative to make it easy for viewers to read.

38:22
Avoid generalities, acronyms, and jargon.

38:26
The people who review your application are museum professionals, but they may not be totally familiar with your particular field.

38:34
In shorthand, make it easy for them to understand what you mean.

38:38
An advantage to starting your application early is you can ask a colleague to review everything with fresh eyes before you submit.

38:46
Ask them to act like a reviewer who's seeing it for the very first time.

38:51
Here are a few important dates relating to the AMIFI applications.

38:56
Applications must be received through grants.gov by 11:59 Eastern Standard Time on March 1st, 2024.

39:06
This date is non negotiable.

39:09
The time stamp is auto generated by grants.gov systems and we have no ability to override them.

39:15
We will say this repeatedly to start early and submit your application early.

39:19
That way, if you encounter difficulty of any kind when submitting your proposal, you still have some time to resolve the problem and resubmit.

39:30
 After the application deadline, IMLS staff will review your application for completeness and eligibility, and you will hear from us via e-mail if there are any problems.

39:40
Next, we will select experienced and knowledgeable peer reviewers to read your applications and provide scores and comments based on the criteria outlined in the ALMIFI Notice of Funding Opportunity.

39:51
IMLS staff will examine your budget, your financials, and track record with past and current grants.

39:58
We then prepare materials for the IMLS Deputy Director for Museums and the IMLS Director.

40:07
By law, the IMLS Director is charged with the authority and responsibility to make these final award decisions, and this typically happens in May.

40:17
In July 2024, we will notify you by e-mail of the award decisions and provide the scores and comments created by the reviewers.

40:25
ALMIFI projects must be scheduled to start on the first day of August 1st, 2024.

40:35
As you read through the NOFO and perhaps your application, additional questions may arise before the application deadline.

40:41
We can help you with learning more about ALMIFI grant programs or other grant programs at IMLS, address any specific concerns with those various application components, or help you understand the review process.

40:54
You may contact IMLS Program staff by e-mail or phone.

40:58
Contact information is listed in the Grant Program landing page on the IMLS website.

41:04
You may also schedule a counselling call to meet directly with program staff.

41:08
Use the links found on the grant Program landing page to find an available time on our calendar.

41:15
You will then receive an e-mail with a calendar invite on Microsoft Teams meeting links.

41:23
Thank you for joining me today for this webinar.

41:25
I hope that it is helpful and if you encounter any questions, please feel free to reach out to us.

41:30
I want to thank my colleagues for their support in this webinar who have also been answering some questions in in during the webinar.

41:39
At this time, I think we will be answering questions.

41:49
Yes.

41:49
Hi everyone.

41:50
Hi Gibran, My name is Dorothy Peck.

41:52
I am also a colleague at the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

41:57
I see our program Specialist, Laura has been answering some of the questions in the chat already, but we'll just grab a few in these last 15 minutes or so to give Gibran the chance to sort of address them as well and just hear them out loud for the entire group.

42:17
So the first question is, "Under Goal 2, does students pursuing advanced studies include students in an MA or PhD program?"

42:30
It should include students, and it does include students that are pursuing a degree in higher education.

42:41
Great.

42:42
And can a proposal address both goals one and two?

42:46
For example, can a funded project involve a student cohort of undergraduate interns and graduate fellows?

42:55
No.

42:56
Each project should be reflective of one goal and the objectives under that goal.

43:04
In this case, I would recommend that there that they develop two applications.

43:09
It is possible to submit two separate applications, but again, be careful with the limiting capacity of the organization that manages the grant.

43:21
Great.

43:22

And can the same institute of higher education participate in and/or receive an ALMIFI grant in consecutive years with a different museum partner?

43:32
Yes.

43:34
There should be no issue with that as long as they meet all eligibility criteria.

43:41
Great.

43:43
And can an institution of higher education partner with more than one museum or cultural institution for this opportunity?

43:52
Yes.

43:52
And in fact, that is encouraged.

43:55
But what I do want to underline is at the very core, there has to be a minimum of one museum.

44:00
So there has to be a partnership between the institution of higher education and the museum.

44:08
Either can be the lead applicant, does not matter, but the partnership has to exist and it is always great if you have other partners that you are working with to submit letters that demonstrate their support, which can be part of your additional material in your application.

44:28
Great.

44:29
And are there criteria for determining or demonstrating whether a museum has, quote, a primary focus on American Latino life, art history and culture?

44:39
I think what's usually best is to have your organization reflect on how it serves the Latino community.

44:46
So you want to demonstrate this in your narrative as to what are your learnings or what are ways in which you connect with the Latino community or Latino history, American Latino history and culture, and have that be reflected as part of your narrative.

45:01
Again, we don't, we don't have that eligibility as part of our process.

45:06
We allow applicants to define that and justify that as part of their application.

45:13
Great.

45:14
All right.

45:14
Before we wrap up, Gibran, do you want to give one last plug for ways that potential applicants can connect with you for any further questions?

45:21
Absolutely.

45:24
So our information is available on our website on imls.gov. You can follow it to the Grants page, which will open up the landing page for the American Latino Internship and Fellowship Initiative.

45:37
Once you click on that landing page, you'll be able to access other resources, recorded webinars, as well as go to a link where you can find time on my schedule so that we can meet and we can counsel a project.

45:48
We don't read applications ahead of time, but we're more than happy to chat with you so that we can figure out any answers to questions that you might have as you prepare your application.

46:02
All right.

46:03
And I think that'll conclude today's webinar.

46:05
Thank you again, Gibran, and thank you to everyone who joined us.

46:09
Thank you, everybody.

46:10
Stay warm.